

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-26. (Cancelled)

27. **(Currently Amended)** A method for measuring an environmental biological allergen(s), which comprises

measuring said biological allergen(s) by measuring protease activity of said allergen(s), wherein said allergen(s) is in a test material(s);

contacting said test material being brought into contact with [[the]] a substrate of said enzyme protease without [[a]] pretreatment of the test material, wherein the pretreatment of the test material is selected from the group consisting of extraction, concentration, and purification of the allergens in the test material; and

correlating the presence or absence or quantity of protease activity with the presence or absence or quantity of allergens.

28. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein said allergen(s) is(are) mite and/or a material(s) originated from mite, and/or pollen.

29. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 28, wherein said pollen is cedar pollen.

30. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 27, wherein the allergen(s) is(are) obtained from an atmosphere, a room air, a floor, a wall, a window, a window frame, a floor covering, a bedding, a fiber product, a furniture, by which an allergen(s) in atmosphere, room air, floor(s), wall(s), window(s), window frame(s), floor covering(s), bedding(s), fiber product(s), furnitures, dust and/or house dust is(are) measured.

31. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 27, wherein the substrate of the protease enzyme, used for the measurement of the enzyme protease activity is a substrate which brings about a fluorescence emission or a change in absorption as a result of [[the]] an enzyme reaction.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein said substrate is carried on a support, and the test material(s) is(are) brought into contact with said support.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 27, wherein said support is a porous support.

34. (Withdrawn) An instrument for measuring a biological allergen(s) by the method according to claim 27, comprising a porous support and a substrate of a protease, which substrate is used for measuring protease activity of said allergen(s), and which substrate is carried on said porous support, said substrate being one which brings about fluorescence emission or change in absorption as a result of the enzyme reaction.

35. (Withdrawn) The instrument according to claim 34, wherein said allergen(s) is(are) mite and/or a material(s) originated from mite, and/or pollen.

36. (Withdrawn) A measuring apparatus for measuring an environmental biological allergen(s) by the method according to claim 27, comprising said instrument according to claim 35, and an optical measuring device which measures fluorescence or the change in absorbance of said porous support.

37. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 36, further comprising a guide which guides a test material(s) to said instrument.

38. (Withdrawn) A measuring apparatus for measuring an environmental biological allergen(s) by the method according to claim 27, comprising a vessel containing solution of substrate of protease, which substrate is used for the measurement of the protease activity of said allergen(s); and optical measuring device which measures fluorescence or the change in absorbance of said solution; said substrate being one which brings about fluorescence emission or change in absorption as a result of the enzyme reaction.

39. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 38, further comprising a guide which guides a test material(s) to said instrument.

40. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 39, wherein said allergen(s) to be measured is(are) guided to a buffer contained in a buffer vessel; and said buffer is guided to said solution.

41. (Withdrawn) A measuring apparatus for measuring an environmental biological allergen(s) by the method according to claim 27, comprising a vessel containing substrate of protease, which substrate is used for measuring protease activity of said allergen(s); and an optical measuring device which measures fluorescence or the change in absorbance of the solution; said substrate being one which brings about fluorescence emission or change in absorption as a result of the enzyme reaction.

42. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 41, wherein said allergen(s) to be measured is(are) guided to a buffer contained in a buffer vessel; and said buffer is guided to said solution.

43. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 31, wherein said substrate is a colored compound ~~which is a pigment having at~~ comprising at least one amino group, at least one amino acid(s) amino acid and/or at least one oligopeptide oligopeptide(s), wherein the at least one amino group, the at least one amino acid and/or the at least one oligopeptide is bound to a pigment via an amide bond being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

44. **(Currently Amended)** The method according to claim 43, wherein said substrate is a colored compound ~~which is a pigment having at~~ comprising at least one amino group, an amino acid(s) and/or at least one amino acid wherein the at least one amino group, the at least one amino acid and/or the at least one oligopeptide is bound to a pigment via an amide bond being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

45. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 43, wherein said pigment is cresyl violet, Safranin O or methylene violet 3RAX.

46. (Withdrawn) The instrument according to claim 34, wherein said substrate is a colored compound which is a pigment having at least one amino group, an amino acid(s) and/or an oligopeptide(s) being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

47. (Withdrawn) The instrument according to claim 46, wherein said substrate is a colored compound which is a pigment having at least one amino group, an amino acid(s) being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

48. (Withdrawn) The instrument according to claim 46, wherein said pigment is cresyl violet, Safranin O or methylene violet 3RAX.

49. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 34, wherein said substrate is a colored compound which is a pigment having at least one amino group, an amino acid(s) and/or an oligopeptide(s) being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

50. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 49, wherein said substrate is a colored compound which is a pigment having at least one amino group, an amino acid(s) being bound to one or more of said at least one amino group through an amide bond(s).

51. (Withdrawn) The measuring apparatus according to claim 43, wherein said pigment is cresyl violet, Safranin O or methylene violet 3RAX.

52. (New) The method according to claim 43, wherein the measurement is carried out by visual observation of a change in color of said colored compound.